

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 207519

44

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DRAFTED BY EUR/SE:NLPZDRAL

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EUR/SE - MR. LEDSKY

USIA/IEU - MR. STEWART

CU/WE - MRS. BISHOP

AID/NE/NENA - MR KNOLL

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R 201800Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC CY

SUBJECT: AUB STUDENTS

1. CYPRIOT AMBASSADOR DIMITRIOU CALLED ON EUR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAINGEN AUGUST 18 TO DISCUSS PROBLEM OF 37 CYPRIOT STUDENTS FORMERLY AT AUB. READING FROM LENGTHY GOC TELEX MESSAGE, DIMITRIOU MADE REASONED PLEA FOR ANY ASSISTANCE WE COULD FURNISH, STRESSED POLITICAL SENSITIVITY THIS ISSUE COULD HAVE BOTH HERE AND IN CYPRUS, AND INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH HE APPRECIATED DISTINCTION WHICH MEANT THAT USG COULD NOT ACCEPT FORMAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ONGOING EDUCATION OF THESE STUDENTS, DISTINCTION WAS BLURRED IN EYES OF THOSE ON THE ISLAND BY FACT THAT THESE STUDENTS HAD BEEN NOMINATED BY THE POST.

2. IN REPLY LAINGEN BRIEFLY TOUCHED ON SOME OF THE VERY COMPLEX LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS WE FACE IN TRYING

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PAGE 02 STATE 207519

TO HELP THESE STUDENTS. HE EXPLAINED WE HAD INVESTIGATED

EXHAUSTIVELY POSSIBILITY OF EITHER (A) USING FULBRIGHT PROGRAM OR (B) TRANSFERRING FUNDS WHICH WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE GONE TO AUB, AND THAT BOTH THESE POSSIBILITIES WERE ABSOLUTELY EXCLUDED FOR LEGAL OR PRACTICAL REASONS. LAINGEN SKETCHED

OUT APPROACH WE ARE TRYING NOW, EMPHASIZING THAT WHILE SIGNALS SEEMED POSITIVE AT THIS PRELIMINARY STAGE, WE COULD GIVE NO GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS. FINALLY, LAINGEN INDICATED THAT WHILE OUR EFFORTS TO FIND PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENTAL HELP CONTINUE VIGOROUSLY TO BE PURSUED, LIKELIHOOD WAS THAT ASSISTANCE MIGHT NOT COME -- IF IT CAME AT ALL -- UNTIL LATE IN THIS SCHOOL YEAR.

3. LAINGEN ALSO ADDRESSED SPECIFIC CRITICISM RAISED BY MRS. SOULIOTI THAT ANY PROGRAM WHICH MIGHT TAP RELIEF FUNDS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS COULD NOT BE ADMINISTERED BY UNHCR. LAINGEN INDICATED THAT DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS HAS LOOKED INTO POSSIBILITY SMALL PROGRAM OF THIS NATURE COULD BE ADMINISTERED DIRECTLY BY CU, AND BELIEVES THAT IT COULD. AS TO CRITICISM THAT THIS WOULD SIMPLY BE TURNING BURDEN BACK ON CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT, LAINGEN SAID (A) WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO NEEDS OF THESE 37 BUT FEEL THIS IS NOT USG RESPONSIBILITY, AND (B) IN VIEW OF UNCERTAINTY AS TO JUST WHERE NEXT YEAR'S AID LEVEL FOR CYPRUS WILL FALL, WE FELT THIS ASPECT NEED NOT BE ADDRESSED NOW.

4. TO DIMITRIOU'S DIRECT QUESTION WHETHER WE FELT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO LOBBY ON THE HILL, LAINGEN RESPONDED THAT IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR US TO ADVISE SUCH A COURSE, BUT THAT IN FACT SOME CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS WERE AWARE OF PROBLEM SINCE WE HAD SOLICITED THEIR SUGGESTIONS AS TO POSSIBLE PRIVATE SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.

5. DIMITRIOU THANKED LAINGEN FOR HELPFUL ATTITUDE AND WORK THUS FAR, SAID HE WOULD SEE WHAT MIGHT BE DONE HERE AND WOULD REPORT CONVERSATION TO GOC.

6. SUBSEQUENT TO MEETING, CONVERSATIONS WITH USAID HERE INDICATE WE WILL PROBABLY NOT HAVE FURTHER PROGRESS RELIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 207519

PORTS ON POSSIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVE FUNDING FOR THE 37 UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER AT EARLIEST. IN DISCUSSING THIS WITH GOC, YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT MATTER IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION, DEPENDS ON CONGRESSIONAL ACTION, AND OUTCOME CANNOT BE FORECAST UNTIL WE ACTUALLY HAVE RECEIVED APPROPRIATION FROM THE HILL. ROBINSON

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